

Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SCCT-01

SY-05 /070 W

----- 076719

R 301601Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7571

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DASMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 07534

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, PINS, SF, LE, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN NEWSMAN MISSING IN BEIRUT

FOREIGN MINISTRY'S ACTING DIRECTOR FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRES (CALLEBAUT) HAS ASKED OUR ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING ANY INFORMATION OR REASONED SPECULATION AS TO WHEREABOUTS OF A BELGIAN NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT MISSING IN BEIRUT SINCE JUNE 7 AND BELIEVED TO BE IN THE HANDS OF ONE OF THE PALESTINIAN GROUPS. THE CORRESPONDENT FOR BRUSSELS DAILY LA LIBRE BELGIQUE, MARC THIRION, WAS REPORTEDLY TAKEN FROM HIS BEIRUT APARTMENT ON THAT DATE BY UNIDENTIFIED ARMED MEN SHORTLY AFTER HE RETURNED FROM COVERING A PALESTINIAN MILITARY ACTION AGAINST LEBANESE CHRISTIANS. CALLEBAUT SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDER "MORE AND MORE PRESSURE" FROM PRESS AND PARLIAMENT TO LOCATE AND SECURE RELEASE OF THIRION. HE SAID THAT BELGIAN EMBASSY IN BEIRUT HAD APPROACHED PALESTINE LEADER GEORGE HABISH ON THIS QUESTION THROUGH LEBANESE POLITICIAN RAYMOND EDDE BUT HABISH CLAIMED
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HIS GROUP HAD "NO KNOWLEDGE" OF THIRION. HOWEVER,

ONE OF HABISH'S AIDES HINTED THAT THIRION HAD BEEN
DETAINED AND WAS UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR POSSIBLE
TIES WITH ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE ELEMENTS. IN REQUESTING
ANY ASSISTANCE WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE IN THIS
MATTER, CALLEBAUT SAID THAT BELGIAN EMBASSY IN
BEIRUT WAS DOWN TO CHARGE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND
IT MIGHT SOON BE FORCED TO CLOSE.RENNER

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NNN

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: RR
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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TAGS: PINR, PINS, SF, LE, BE
To: SECSTATE WASHDC BEIRUT AMMAN CAIRO DASMASCUS TEL AVIV TRIPOLI
Type: TE
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